Checking the Rear View Mirror: The Preparation of Two-Year College Faculty

A close examination of a past successful training program for two-year faculty offers possibilities for both future programs and reforms in graduate English studies.

With recent calls for more appropriate training of two-year college English faculty and better methods of educating all graduate students about teaching in two-year institutions, it seems appropriate to review past efforts before initiating changes to existing programs or launching new ones. Such a review is especially important since these latest calls join a long list of similar pleas over the past decades.[1]

> As Darin Jensen and Christie Toth have recently pointed out, there is
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> . . . unknown to many in the field . . . a significant history of specialized graduate programs for teaching English in two-year colleges. The fates of many of these programs--dissolution, transformation, absorption into a more generic curriculum, or relative obscurity--offer instructive considerations for renewed efforts to transform graduate education . . . (forthcoming).

Far too many of those programs were known only locally and either under publicized or never fully described for a wider audience.[2] Yet, in 1978, the second installment of the "National Directory of Graduate Programs for Junior/Community College English Faculty" compiled by Gregory Cowan and published in *Teaching English in the Two-Year* College, listed forty-three university programs with appropriate training for two-year college faculty. Some of them, when operational, undoubtedly had elements of value to participants and could be instructive now to any contemplating future training of two-year faculty. Knowing our history is always important, but as David Gold has

insisted, "historiography must not simply recover neglected writers, teachers, locations, and institutions, but must also demonstrate connections between these subjects and larger scholarly conversations" (17).

In this essay, I examine one of those early programs with which I have firsthand knowledge, one created in the 1970s in answer to a call for new programs to train two-year faculty. That program originated at Carnegie Mellon University (CMU), and although short-lived (1975-83), was deemed a success by participants, including this author. A number of its features should interest anyone designing or revising contemporary programs to educate current and future two-year faculty or graduate faculties interested in informing their students about teaching in two-year institutions. Before undertaking this project, I conducted an informal survey of colleagues from the initial years of that program, and their comments contribute to the following account.

The Program Design

In 1970, as two-year institutions began to proliferate at an amazing rate, the Conference on College Composition and Communication created a committee, chaired by Gregory Cowan of Forest Park Community College in St. Louis, to propose new guidelines for training two-year college faculties. Those "Guidelines," published in *College Composition and Communication* in 1971, called for programs focusing on all levels of composition, introductory literature, and multiple other needs of the diverse students flocking into two-year institutions, especially underprepared and adult students.

As the first institution to offer in 1968 the new Doctor of Arts degree with its emphasis on pedagogy, Carnegie Mellon was well prepared to undertake the training of faculty in the expanding teaching intensive institutions.[3] Based upon the Cowan

"Guidelines" and consultations with Pittsburgh area community colleges, CMU created an entirely new and innovative program and launched it in 1975.[4] The program was designed to be offered summers only for inservice two-year college faculty with a master's degree and a minimum of two-years' teaching experience. After a second summer of course work, students completed an internship on their home campus to test new curriculum materials developed in their courses and wrote a paper evaluating the internship. After three summers of coursework, the internship, and the paper, students received a Certificate of Specialization in the Teaching of English in the Two-Year College. The program was non sequential with rolling enrollment, so new students entered each summer, adding several participants with fresh perspectives annually.

Those who wished to continue for the Doctor of Arts degree in English could apply after the third summer. If accepted, they completed an independent reading course on a literary period and a series of related short papers, an oral examination on the literary period and the teaching of composition, a dissertation, and an oral defense. The majority of students continued for the DA, and as designed into the program, most were able to use the curriculum materials they developed for their internship as the foundation for their dissertation, expanding them, and further testing them on their home campus.

Innovative and unique for the Carnegie Mellon program was its design to function with a peer relationship between CMU faculty and the two-year college participants. Those who created the program strongly believed that both groups had much to learn from each other. In the words of program director Jan Cohn:

> It is essential that critical changes occur in the graduate classroom to permit a process of mutual education to occur between the graduate instructor and the students--who happen also to be instructors. What must exist in the classroom is a peer relationship . . . in the real and operating sense of two sets of professionals with two areas of expertise working together. We have much to teach one another and, from our mutual teaching, can come a significant development in graduate education for community college teachers, as well as much-needed experiment and change in graduate programs themselves. ("An Experiment" 151)

Perhaps, the most important element of the intended collaborative effort was that participants would have a significant role in designing courses. Of necessity, the first set of courses had to be created by CMU faculty, but in subsequent summers, students played a major role in selecting the courses to be taught and their content.

There was also the conviction that the university wanted to deliver high-level intellectual coursework and the most relevant content possible, and that the two-year participants themselves knew best the kind of courses and content they needed. Because participants were experienced two-year teachers, they expected to learn as much from each other as from textbooks or CMU faculty, for in this program, there were no novices; all were considered experienced professionals. After the first summer, courses were created only after consultation with currently enrolled students, helping assure the relevant content, high interest, and currency participants sought. Because of the student-faculty collaboration, students felt part of a dynamic program that they actively helped evolve as they sought to have it most effectively serve their needs. One participant said of the faculty-student and student-student interactions: "At times both in

class and out, we would strike a harmony that was collegial" (Marjorie Thompson). On the whole, students agreed that the effort at the peer relationship was not only successful but a highlight of the program.

Each summer, the program offered a "skills course" (writing or reading) and a literature course. Innovative was the linking of one team-taught course each summer with a curriculum seminar alternating with either the skills course or the literature course. Generally, one faculty member was responsible for the subject matter component and the other for the curriculum seminar. In these content components, students discussed the elements of composition or reading or literature and its relevant theory. In the accompanying seminars, they discussed pedagogy in the two-year classroom related to composition or reading or literary works. The curriculum seminars provided significant discussions of classroom applications of composition approaches and their theory and the teaching of literature to often reluctant readers, concerns always of interest and importance to two-year faculty. This curriculum component allowed students to use the graduate course content and its study to develop teaching materials appropriate for a course they taught on their home campus. Over the three summers, they were, thus, able to develop materials in composition, reading, or literature that they could then test at their institutions during the internship. In these seminar sessions, students who were currently in the trenches in the classroom brought their knowledge, immediacy, and relevance to discussions as they made connections between the graduate course content and their specific teaching needs. Several students called the seminars one of the program's strongest features, noting that "there were always good discussions of high value" (David Thompson). These linked courses

met five days a week, with three days devoted to content/theory (MWF) and two days to pedagogy/curriculum (TTH). Alternately, a course would devote two days to content/theory (MW), two days to pedagogy/curriculum (TTH), and one day to both (F).

Further enhancing the program were regularly scheduled colloquia providing information on supplemental areas of importance to those in two-year institutions. At least three colloquia lasting two hours were scheduled during afternoons each summer, dealing with such subjects as teaching adult students, developing a writing lab, assessment, classroom research, and professional publishing. Experienced two-year faculty or staff from Pittsburgh area colleges conducted most of the colloquia, usually in a two-hour afternoon time slot. During the first summer, colloquia specifically dealt with unionization and the community college, with two speakers from the local Community College of Allegheny County; faculty involvement in community service, with the directors of community service from the University of Pittsburgh and a campus of Allegheny; and a third colloquia focused on institutional research and proposal writing, featuring both a dean and the director of grants from Allegheny. Colloquia included formal presentations, discussions, question-answer sessions, and copious handouts. Students with a strong interest in a particular subject of a session had an opportunity for additional follow-up with presenters.

Invited speakers were also a part of most courses. Speakers such as CMU faculty members Linda Flower on problem-solving and her early ground-breaking research on protocol analysis, cognitive psychologist John Hayes on problem-solving and his collaborative research with Flower, Erwin Steinberg on technical and professional writing, and Richard Young on invention further enriched the courses. Colloquia assured

coverage of the many tangential areas called for in Cowan's "Guidelines" and important to two-year faculty. The guest speakers introduced students to new research, research methodology, and other important areas.

The Courses

Specific details about the courses in 1975 indicate their value to participants. The composition course for the first summer, Language and the Teaching of Writing, was taught by the inimitable Marilyn Sternglass early in her career. With a background in linguistics and composition, she designed a course focused on varied approaches to composition, language, and dialects. The majority of the course dealt with approaches to teaching composition then in vogue. Marilyn had students divide into groups based upon their interest in one of the approaches, which the group investigated and then presented orally in a workshop to the entire class. Each group first met with Marilyn to discuss how they would present the approach and the writing assignment they would have the class complete based on the approach. Groups, in turn, then presented their approach in class and gave their writing assignment. All class members, including the teacher, completed the assignment. When due, class members circulated their papers, with everyone reading and writing comments on their classmates' papers. After a few days when all had been read and returned, the class discussed the merits of the approach, their experience writing a paper based on it, and the appropriateness of the approach for their own teaching. These were the approaches with the accompanying texts: highly structured or traditional five-paragraph theme (Sheridan Baker, *The Practical Stylist* and *The Complete Stylist*), free writing (Ken Macrorie, *Writing to Be Read*; Peter Elbow, *Writing without Teachers*), Christensen's generative rhetoric

(Francis Christensen, *Notes toward a New Rhetoric*), sentence combining (Frank O'Hare, *Sentence Combining: Improving Student Writing without Formal Grammar Instruction*; William Strong, *Sentence Combining: A Composing Book*), and dialect interference in writing (Walter A. Wolfram and Ralph W. Fasold, *The Study of Social Dialects in American English;* workshop by Marilyn Sternglass).

The elements of language discussed in that course included the fundamentals of transformational grammar (Mark Lester, *Introductory Transformational Grammar of English*; Owen P. Thomas and Eugene R. Kintgen, *Transformational Grammar and the Teacher of English*); transformational sentence analysis and composing; the aspects model (Thomas and Kintgen); and a workshop on dialect interference and composition conducted by Marilyn Sternglass. Additional texts included Mina Shaugnessey's *Basic Writing,* Virginia Tufte's *Grammar as Style*, Virginia Tufte and Garrett Stewart's *Grammar as Style: Exercises in Creativity*, and Jean Malmstrom and Constance Weaver's *Transgrammar.*

The major paper for the course required students to select one of the approaches to composition, develop a rationale for its use in their own composition courses, describe in detail how they would adapt the approach for their specific teaching situation, create detailed assignments and describe why and how they would be used, and explain how they would assess and evaluate the approach--a highly appropriate, practical, and valuable undertaking for those interested in improving their composition pedagogy. Interestingly, from this one course, most students in the first program group drew their eventual curriculum internship testing materials, and subsequently, for those who continued into the DA program, those materials became the foundation for their

dissertation research. In retrospect, the early offering of this eclectic and broad-ranging course provided a strong foundation and allowed most students to make a connection with course content and their particular teaching situation. Whether it was Marilyn Sternglass's expertise and personality, her teaching style, or the course content--more likely all of them--throughout the duration of the program, students fortunate enough to participate in that course praised its worth. Significant to all participants was the opportunity to consider so many varied elements of theory and pedagogy relevant to all levels of composition.

The literature course for that first summer was entitled Literature and the Newer Media. Designed to pair print literature with film, video tape, or audio versions of each work, it examined additional film and television productions with similar themes that could be appropriate for classroom use. The literature dealt with women's issues and themes, featured strong female characters, and instructors in the team-taught course primarily used a feminist approach, one new to most students. Works such as Euripides' *Medea*, Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*, Chaucer's Marriage Group *Canterbury Tales*, Erica Jong's *Fear of Flying,* Hawthorne's *The Scarlett Letter*, Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, short stories such as "The Yellow Wall Paper," and poets such as Sylvia Plath, Denise Levertov, and Anne Sexton were among the works and authors studied. That first summer the curriculum seminar accompanied this course, allowing students to discuss the literature three days a week and the teaching of that literature in a two-year setting the other two. The main focus of the seminar was methodology--how to use the visual and audio versions of the literature to enhance students' understanding of the print versions and how to incorporate the feminist approach when appropriate. Both

significant media use and the feminist approach were new at the time, yet highly appropriate since two-year faculty across the country were struggling in their classrooms with how to engage students who were mostly non-readers and also dealing with an influx of adult women students, likely to find the themes and approach appealing.

In this course, students wrote six short pedagogical papers about pairing literature and media in a course they commonly taught. In one case, for example, students devised a complete lesson plan for a literary work and the accompanying media, including discussion questions with answers and related writing assignments. In a final long paper students described in detail how they would incorporate media into one of their courses. Supplements to this course included a guided visit to the Carnegie Institute Museum of Art followed by a discussion of how reproductions of art works could be used to enhance teaching literature, a visit to the university computer center to hear a discussion of computer use in literary research, a presentation by the president of a Pittsburgh advertising agency on language, visuals, and tactics used in advertising, followed by a discussion of how print or video ads might be used in the classroom, and a special session on the adult student considering problems, pedagogy, and opportunities.

One of the most important points to be made about these courses is that the participants had the unique position of always being both students and practicing faculty members themselves. In that composition course and especially in the literature course and seminar, there was always time to examine course content and related theory pedagogically within the context of the two-year classroom and from the prospective of

two-year college students with their diversity and varied levels of competence. As teachers, sometimes we would focus discussions on the basic writing student, sometimes on the adult student, sometimes on the technical writing student, the honors student, even those in a philosophy class because two participants taught that subject. The capability of the participants to function in the dual roles of graduate student and classroom teacher and to transition effortlessly between those roles within most classes created a synergy and chemistry rare in graduate courses.

As these details suggest, the courses were concentrated and intense, requiring extensive reading and writing. Fortunately, course reading lists were sent to students in the spring so that much of the reading could be done before the summer courses began. Helping ease the intensity and enhancing the total program experience were regularly scheduled social activities each summer. Such respites from the academic work were helpful for all students. Most program faculty hosted students in their homes over each summer for meals, cookouts, dessert parties, or swimming outings. Even when no events were formally planned, in the few spare hours, faculty encouraged participants to take advantage of the cultural and recreational opportunities in the Pittsburgh area, offering numerous suggestions each summer from Pirates baseball to repertory theater to summer pops.

Near the end of the first summer, Jan Cohn met with all students to discuss the courses tentatively planned for the next summer, enacting the promised peer relationship to the fullest as she sought consensus on the courses. The planned skills course was to be Creative Writing as Composition. Students expressed concerns about that course, specifically whether the entire course should focus so heavily on creative

writing, thinking that other approaches should be included. The concern was mild, but Jan promised to convey it to the course instructors. The literature course was to be Ethnic Writing in America, but students expressed a desire for broader coverage than simply ethnic literature. Group consensus was for contemporary literature of the type filling the many new introductory literature anthologies flooding the market and which most of the group felt ill-prepared to teach, ethnic included. Jan herself was planning to teach the next summer's literature course and promised an attempt to devise a different course to meet the participants' request.

Another meeting near the end of the first summer convened participants to discuss making presentations at professional meetings, something few had done. Three or four students were members and had attended meetings of NCTE's regional two-year college conferences. CMU faculty members encouraged the group to make presentations about their experiences in the program at one of the next available regional conferences, both to get the experience of presenting at a professional meeting and to publicize the program. From that gathering arose a plan to create panels to present papers at an upcoming two-year conference close to the students' homes. Students and faculty made the necessary contacts and secured program slots at four of the conferences. Panels consisted of three or four students and a faculty member, with the faculty member discussing the university view of the program and students discussing such areas as the validity and appropriateness of the DA degree, the peer relationship element of the program, and the purpose, content, and value of particular courses. For most of the students, it was their first conference presentation, and all agreed afterwards a valuable and rewarding experience. The conference sessions were

well attended and received, and interestingly, attracted university faculty members, many of whom expressed an interest in attracting more two-year faculty to their graduate programs and a couple who told the audiences their departments were interested in starting similar programs. Encouraged by the faculty, several students were able to turn those conference presentations into published journal articles, advancing their own professionalization.

When the second summer began, after seeing the syllabus and attending several sessions of the composition course, students sensed an immediate problem. Apparently, the entire course would focus on "a creative writing approach to composition," not what the students had asked for or expected. Therefore, they requested a meeting with Jan and expressed concern about the direction of the course. Jan promised to meet with the instructors and explain the concern. One instructor readily seemed willing to change the course; the other somewhat grudgingly complained about preparing a course and having little time to develop a new one. However, after a class session of hashing everything out and mutually agreeing to a week and a half devoted to the creative writing approach, instructors and students seemed content with the new direction of the course. From the students' perspective, the peer relationship they had been promised and the opportunity for significant input into course content succeeded. The two faculty members may have had a different perspective.[5] Some students remained unhappy with the direction of the course, but perhaps, unfairly were comparing it to the previous summer's composition course.

That course, linked with the curriculum seminar, ended up being an eclectic approach to teaching composition, covering multiple areas of composition and how to

handle them. As indicated, there was discussion of the elements of creative writing pedagogy that could be useful in the two-year composition classroom, especially workshopping, collaboration, and peer review, and most students found these sessions useful in considering their own writing classes. Since one of the instructors actually was a creative writer and taught creative writing courses, he presented sessions on teaching poetry and short fiction. Those who taught creative writing or hoped to found these sessions valuable, as did those who taught introductory literature. Other areas covered included developing remedial writing courses, problem-solving research and its applications to teaching writing, and the process approach to composing. Guest speakers leading class sessions included Linda Flower on problem-solving, Richard Zelonka on research methodology and program evaluation, Lallie Coy on Van Nostrand's functional writing and self-paced instruction, Erwin Steinberg on consulting about writing in business and industry, Vernell Lilly on psychodrama in the composition and literature class, Concetta Greenfield on the use of film in composition classes and on teaching English as a second language.

The literature course the second summer was entitled Contemporary Literature and dealt with fiction--novels and short stories--and nonfiction--including biography and new journalism of the period.[6] Class discussions centered on efforts to discern the characteristics and themes prevalent in contemporary fiction and to determine the important literary, philosophical, and socio-political trends. Examples included literature at all audience levels from popular literature aimed at mass audiences to experimental and avant-garde. The attention to a wide variety of contemporary literature provided an intellectual framework for teachers whose anthologies contained writing drawn from that

corpus. Two papers required students to deal with at least three literary works and explore in more depth the themes and characteristics discussed in class in an effort to define contemporary literature. The course, class discussions, and papers were intellectually stimulating, and the approach and genres studied were relevant to teaching introductory literature in two-year institutions.

Colloquia during the second summer included a joint session with students from the history department on professional publishing, the development of a campus skills center, a discussion of community college administration issues by the president of a campus of the Community College of Allegheny County, and a presentation on the innovative English program at Forest Park Community College in St. Louis.

That second summer, students developed their curriculum materials in either composition or literature suitable for a course they regularly taught. Their major course paper was a discussion of those materials, and each student made an oral presentation in the curriculum seminar about the materials they had developed and would class test and evaluate in their internship during the subsequent academic year. Materials consisted of a major course component or significant teaching unit. Examples from students in the first program group in 1976 included incorporating television programming into a segment of a composition course; a unit of materials developed specifically for adult students in a first-year writing course; a series of individualized technical writing units; individualized, self-paced composition units for a first-year writing course; customized units for honors composition, a major component for free writing in first-year composition; specialized units for remedial writers in a basic writing course; a unit on teaching the essay exam in first-year writing; a writing/performing unit on ritual

theater for introductory literature; and an independent writing component for a second-year British literature survey.

Following evaluation of their papers, class presentations, and discussions, students incorporated suggestions and revised as needed. Before leaving campus the second summer, each student was assigned an appropriate preceptor from the CMU faculty who oversaw the internship and consulted as needed before and during the curriculum testing. Students kept detailed records during the testing of their materials and then wrote a paper to discuss their results and evaluate their experience.

The courses described above are representative of others in the program and suggest how both composition and literature courses could cover multiple areas of interest and relevance to two-year college faculty. All courses required substantial papers and were essentially conducted as seminars with faculty leading discussions of readings and theory. In most courses, papers allowed students to examine, evaluate, and adapt course content to their particular institutional and teaching needs. In others, such as the contemporary literature course where students wrote traditional seminar papers, they were enhancing their intellectual background and depth of understanding of the types of literature many would be teaching. Thus, the program encouraged students to tailor course content into appropriate individualized writing and research projects of interest and relevance to their particular institutional and pedagogical situations. Students with diverse teaching interests easily adapted and found they could develop suitable projects. For example, one student taught two introductory philosophy courses and wanted to explore a writing component in those courses. Another had just helped initiate an honors English program on her campus and was interested in

developing curriculum for it. Another student had a strong interest in Ernest Hemingway and was able to explore further that writer's work in the literature courses. Another primarily taught technical writing and focused on new materials for those courses. Because of the program's flexibility, it encouraged reflection on one's own teaching and development of individualized projects relevant to each student. Being able to explore an individualized pedagogical interest each summer, return to one's campus and put into practice what one had studied, and to experiment with newly developed materials with one's own students made for a rich and rewarding conjoining of graduate study and classroom teaching. It also facilitated opportunities for classroom research so that students could examine in depth particular pedagogical approaches and new teaching materials.

During the second summer, colloquia dealt with the development, staffing, and operation of an on-campus skills center to assist students with deficiencies in writing and reading. In two separate sessions, students heard from the director and several staff members from the University of Pittsburgh's skills and counseling center. And in a joint session with history students, the president of the Community College of Allegheny County discussed the role of the humanities in community colleges.

The literature course for the third summer with the accompanying curriculum seminar was American Literature and American Society, 1913-30, a specially designed interdisciplinary course that looked at social, political, and economic issues in American culture and the relationship between the literature and the society that produced it.[7] The accompanying curriculum seminar focused on interdisciplinary elements of the course as it examined the politics, art, music, architecture, film, and journalism of the period

and how those areas could be used to enhance the teaching of the literature. It allowed students to explore how they could employ an interdisciplinary approach to courses on their own campus.

Interestingly, one of the faculty members for this course had previously taught at CMU but was then a two-year college instructor, who had been chosen for his American literature expertise. However, his knowledge and understanding of the two-year environment, created a strong rapport with students and strengthened the course. Formal papers let students investigate significant cultural elements in multiple works or focus on common themes in multiple works. A number of guest speakers provided substantial background for the non literary elements, as did supplemental readings. A final paper for the curriculum seminar asked students to create a plan to introduce appropriate interdisciplinary elements from areas such as art, music, architecture, film, politics, or popular culture into one of the courses they taught. Since few community college teachers then had at their disposal an array of appropriate guest speakers or the resources of a university readily available, students designed their own workable interdisciplinary course within the framework of their instructional and institutional constraints. Many students chose to create interdisciplinary components in composition courses, making for some innovative and forward-thinking experimental designs, which were presented orally to the class near the end of the term.

The reading course, Reading Skills for Adult Students, was one requested by the students, most of whom felt inadequately prepared to deal with students who were more often than not poor readers and illiterate. The course drew upon the latest linguistics research and covered structural, psycholinguistic, and sociolinguistic approaches to

reading as well as research on the nature of error in reading. The main texts were Aaron S. Carton, *Orientation to Reading* and Frank Smith's *Understanding Reading: A Psycholinguistic Analysis of Reading and Learning to Read*. Students produced a series of short papers related to their own experiences with classroom reading problems and a final course paper requiring them to develop new teaching materials that would solve a reading problem they had identified in their teaching. As students learned about reading theory and the latest pedagogical approaches to teaching reading in college, they applied course material to their own institutional setting and student population. To enhance coverage of the subject, students read numerous journal articles, wrote brief papers on them, and gave oral presentations to the class on their supplemental reading. Students also presented their final papers orally.

Third summer colloquia consisted of Linda Flower discussing her latest research and work with protocol analysis, a session on computer use in the humanities, and a session on curriculum development.

In all courses, students duplicated their formal papers so that every student had a copy. Such sharing of work enhanced the collaborative nature of the program, contributed to camaraderie, and expanded the learning enterprise as students discussed the variety of approaches to assignments taken by classmates.

Fourth summer courses in 1978 included Recent Developments in Teaching Composition: Practical Applications of Research with the curriculum seminar, taught by the newly appointed CMU English department chair, Richard Young, and Strategies for Teaching Minority Literatures: Initiation and Assimilation. Subsequent summers

continued the same trend of a skills course and a literature course, with the curriculum seminar focused on pedagogy alternating between the two.

After successful completion of the third summer and receipt of the certificate, most students sought admission to the doctoral program. One or two who did not cited the expense or the lack of need for the degree at their home institution. One or two who sought admission were not accepted; ostensibly based on their writing ability, a major consideration for participants' admission to the doctoral program which required the demonstrated ability to produce a substantial and lengthy high quality written work in the judgment of all program faculty. The majority who entered the doctoral program completed the requirements and received the Doctor of Arts degree. The few who entered and did not complete had the usual problems: research or dissertation problems or life disruptions.

Those who continued for the DA, first, completed the year-long independent reading course on a literary period of their choice and a series of short papers on the reading, all planned in detail with the faculty member who supervised the course. There then followed an oral exam on the literary period and the teaching of composition, a dissertation, and an oral defense. Students had a choice of a curricular dissertation or a traditional critical scholarly dissertation. Students from the summer program who had developed curricular materials in their courses and tested them in their internship had been directly prepared for the curricular dissertation. The dissertation expanded that work and presented a unit of study, either a complete course or a major component, a rationale describing its original qualities and significance, and the need it filled for a particular student body. The course was taught one or more times, then presented

completely in the thesis with rationale and a thorough evaluation of strengths and weaknesses and complete bibliographical support.

The more traditional dissertation presented original literary criticism, literary historical research, or a critical interpretation of a work or works of literature. Students in the two-year college program selecting this option were required to add a supplemental chapter discussing the significance of their research for the two-year college classroom.

Retrospective Assessment

For its time, this Carnegie Mellon program was not only innovative, it was prescient: in its concerted efforts to meld theory and praxis, in its determination to offer an intellectually challenging experience alongside the pedagogical explorations essential to two-year faculty, in its introduction of multimedia into both literature and composition pedagogy, in its recognition of the value of creative writing pedagogy in the composition classroom, in its strong emphasis on the value of classroom research in the two-year college, in its focus on the importance of the writing-reading connection, in its recognition of the value of interdisciplinary approaches to instruction, in its encouragement of both scholarship and professionalization for two-year faculty, and in its recognition and efforts to meet the multifaceted needs of two-year college teachers and their students.

The program succeeded, as well, in producing graduates who became active, contributing scholars and professionals on their campuses and in the larger academic arena. Nearly every participant in the CMU program moved into positions of leadership during their careers on their home campus as department chairs, division chairs, coordinators of curriculum, directors of specialized programs, or higher level

administrators. Most were active in discipline organizations at state, regional, national, and international levels, presenting papers at their conferences and serving in leadership positions. Many published widely: journal articles, textbooks, professional books, and books for popular presses. One edited *Teaching English in the Two-Year College* for seven years; another is currently a Contributing Scholar to the Hemingway Letters Project published by Cambridge University Press. The CMU program succeeded in producing not only rededicated and energized teachers, but effective campus leaders, active professionals, and productive scholars.

At least two participants who entered the Carnegie Mellon program initially were faculty in small four-year colleges and chose the program for its pedagogical focus and relevance to their institutional situations. William Reinsmith, responding to my query, reported that his degree was received "quite well" by his college and "served me well in my institutional situation." Two other participants in the first group to enter were at two-year branch campuses of major universities. For one of those, her two-year branch later became a four-year branch of the university, and she transitioned well into the role of English department chair in the new institution. A few participants, late in their careers, found themselves at two-year campuses that added the baccalaureate degree in several fields. Regardless of their quite varied institutional and teaching situations, all who responded to my inquiry, felt well prepared by the CMU experience for their varied career paths.

Because of the historical distance of this program, most participants are now retired; only a few remain in full-time teaching; several are deceased, as are most of the faculty. However, of those I was able to contact and from whom I received responses,

all were eager to report on their CMU experiences. From their responses, it is clear that this program was deemed not only worthwhile and valuable, but even life-changing. One who is still teaching full-time wrote:

> My CMU experience had a major impact on my academic career. I was promoted to assistant, associate, and full professor as soon as possible. That CMU program enabled us to concentrate specifically on instruction at the two-year college. Every week since 1975, I probably use something in the classroom (or online) that I learned from my CMU experiences. (Bill Stiffler)

Of the dual courses in skills and literature, Marjorie Thompson said:

> The bifurcated curriculum seemed entirely appropriate for students whose responsibilities were teaching writing, reading, and literature, and who needed an understanding of literature from a breadth of cultural viewpoints.

Another found worth in the program's main features:

> . . . the concentration of coursework in the summers; the peer relationships among participants and faculty; the balance of literature and composition courses with the great attention to emerging theory in composition. In my final summer (after taking a year off to have a baby), I took courses without having the support and interaction of the group of peers that I had the first two years. It was more like a traditional grad experience and not nearly as helpful or valuable. The content of the courses was as good but the sharing of ideas, the encouragement, and the out-of-class growth experiences were missing. (Ellen Andrews Knodt)

Ellen goes on to add this interesting historical note:

> One other thing--though it is a bit of an anomaly--I had never had a female English professor before Jan Cohn and Lois Fowler! None at Northwestern and none at Purdue. CMU helped me see myself as a potential professor (I was an adjunct and non-tenure track instructor before getting the DA).

My own assessment:

> Unquestionably, I learned a great deal about teaching both composition and literature and how to apply what I learned to my own classroom. I learned from the professors, the course readings, the many papers I wrote, but especially from the often electric class discussions and the close interactions with other participants, those dedicated colleagues who not only stimulated my thinking, but inspired and supported my work. The Carnegie Mellon experience propelled me into a successful career as a teacher, administrator, and active professional. ( )
>
> No program, of course, is without critics, and a few respondents had some valid criticism. Obviously, those with dissertation issues had complaints. Others felt a few CMU faculty members did not buy into the peer relationship fully, did not have knowledge of the latest developments in composition, or had insufficient knowledge about two-year institutions or teaching in them. No program nor every facet of a program is going to please every student. Certainly, as CMU transitioned toward a major new program in composition and rhetoric, new faculty hires filled the gap in any weaknesses in those areas in the two-year program's waning years, and students who followed those in the initial group benefited from the expertise of the newly hired composition scholars. Although those CMU faculty who designed its program made every effort to become informed about two-year colleges by visiting area community

college campuses and conferring with faculty and staff during the planning stages, perhaps as recommended in the latest TYCA *Guidelines* (Two-Year College English Association), what is most needed in universities offering training for two-year faculty is to employ some faculty with two-year experience to teach in the program, or at the least, act as ongoing consultants. Not only is there historical precedent for such an arrangement, but at least at one point in the past, it appeared that such practice might become widespread and beneficial to four-year institutions.[8] Although two-year institutions vary widely, there are ample descriptions in the literature of two-year faculty and their instructional needs.[9] Yet any university contemplating a training program should consult closely with two-year faculty in its area to learn specifically the types of offerings that will appeal to those faculty, as well as learn as much about the characteristics and functioning of the nearby two-year institutions as possible.

A number of reasons exist for the demise of the Carnegie Mellon program. Most important, was the university's decision in the early 1980s to go in a different direction for the English department with the establishment of a PhD in rhetoric and composition when that field proliferated and to follow the national trend at the time of eliminating Doctor of Arts programs.[10] Other reasons may have contributed to the university's decision. The program consistently enrolled only around a dozen students each year and was never able to attract a larger number. Reasons for that may include the lack of incentives for two-year faculty to complete a doctorate, the high tuition at the private Carnegie Mellon, the increased availability of other programs around the country marketed to two-year college faculty, and the beginnings of the nationwide economic trend of replacing full-time faculty with part-time faculty.

Sadly, it has been not only the Carnegie Mellon program that has vanished, but all Doctor of Arts programs in English, as well. According to Jensen and Toth's investigations: "The D.A. in English is dead." Those programs, with their strong emphasis on pedagogy, had attracted many interested in two-year college teaching. Their disappearance leaves a major void. Even more distressing is the disappearance of most certificate programs and grouped-course components across varied departments aimed at two-year faculty. While Cowan's 1978 "Directory" listed forty-three programs specially designed to train two-year English faculty, Jensen and Toth's latest study lists only nineteen such programs--and much more dismaying--only four of those are in English departments.

Learning from the Past

What might university graduate programs learn from the Carnegie Mellon program as they attempt to meet the needs of current and future two-year college faculty and fulfill the latest TYCA *Guidelines* or the MLA Task Force's directive to educate all graduate students about two-year college teaching? As Jan Cohn reported after the first summer of the CMU program, comments on a questionnaire completed by participants indicated their high interest in a program that was academically stimulating and intellectually challenging, the very goals graduate English departments seek for their programs. From decades ago, these two-year faculty members voiced the same sentiment that has reverberated across the decades: the traditional PhD was and remains inappropriate as preparation for two-year college teaching; likewise are programs over saturated with pedagogy, curriculum, or the usual schools of education courses. Rather, as Cohn indicated, "It was the blend, the fusion, of academic and

professional concerns that made the summer successful for the participants ("An Experiment" 152)." Now, as then, no entity is better able to deliver the solid preparation, suitable training, or scholarly rigor needed by two-year faculty than a discipline-based academic department.

Alternative and flexible scheduling was a hallmark of the CMU program, and the majority of participants cited the summers-only schedule as a significant reason for selecting it. It allowed them to keep full-time teaching positions while completing both the certificate program and the doctoral degree. As one CMU participant commented,

> The ability to take summer courses, then return to my home campus and apply and experiment with what I had learned each summer for three consecutive summers was, indeed, unique. I became a better, more engaged, more energetic, and enthusiastic teacher. (Pearl Gasarch)

Another indicated that a strength of the program was "a concentrated time to participate rather than the dragged out affair usually associated with conventional doctoral programs" (William Reinsmith).

Therefore, flexible and alternative scheduling of any program might well have the most appeal for two-year faculty--summers, nights, weekends, online, or a combination. Certainly, such scheduling will prove most suitable for employed faculty. That scheduling would also make offerings more available to regular full-time graduate students who might enroll in the courses to enhance their own knowledge of two-year college teaching. Throughout the duration of the Carnegie Mellon program, those summer courses were open to regular, full-time graduate students. Most every course each summer had one or two such students. They enrolled because they were attracted

to the subject matter of the courses or they wanted to learn more about teaching in a two-year college. In either case, they had arranged with the English department for credit toward their master's or doctoral degree. In most every case, those students contributed to the richness of the courses, even if a few were flummoxed by the peer familiarity.

As previous prescriptions and the latest *Guidelines* indicate, university departments must know that two-year faculty are the best possible resources for the kinds of courses and programs that will be most relevant and attract potential students. Two-year faculty know their institutional and student needs; they know their own deficiencies. It is, moreover, important for university graduate English departments to realize that they have current courses, particularly in composition, appropriate for two-year college teachers; some literature courses, likewise, would be appropriate, and others might need only minor modifications. University faculty in both composition and literature have the expertise to provide additional courses of the type needed by their two-year college counterparts, especially the many who have embraced the importance of pedagogy. Two-year faculty often need help with new technology applications, new developments in multimodal composition, visual and digital rhetorics, new literatures, and a variety of workforce writing applications. University faculty proficiency exists in such areas in most English department, if not, then elsewhere on campus. From the CMU program, universities can see how they can create programs using resources from across the university and nearby institutions to supplement their offerings with components like the CMU colloquia; the curriculum seminars attached to courses to deal with related pedagogy; guest speakers drawn from other departments, other institutions, or business

and industry; and relevant off-campus visits of value to participants. Departments might create variations of any of these elements in the form of mini workshops, roundtables, symposia, or other abbreviated formats, singly or team-created, internally or externally. From the CMU program, both university and two-year faculty should see how they can collaborate to develop individual courses--concentrated, accelerated, or abbreviated. Most importantly, university faculty should realize that they have much to learn from their two-year colleagues and that mutual efforts at collaboration and cooperation can lead to mutually beneficial results for both groups. Past efforts such as Carnegie Mellon's can help show a way.

Relevant here, as well, is some of what Steve North called for in his study a few years back of the doctoral program at SUNY Albany, *Refiguring the PhD in English Studies*. For certain, as Jan Cohn noted decades ago, a fusion curriculum best served the needs of two-year college students years ago, and as North advocates in his study, a fusion curriculum may best serve the needs of all graduate students in English. Moreover, North recognized well the need to involve the students themselves in their own education. That CMU program demonstrated years ago the value and importance of including advanced students in the planning process. Unlike North, it is beyond the scope of my purpose in this article to call for the wholesale redesign of PhD programs, although I certainly would agree with him on the need for major reform. What I do propose, of course, are new programs within graduate English departments to educate appropriately two-year college faculty. I would also assert that any departments creating such programs would be well on their way to significant reform. For those who favor reform, it might well be that making the effort to meet both the new *TYCA Guidelines*

and the *MLA Task Force* recommendations could be the catalyst needed for changes in graduate English programs--proceeding like the termite rather than the bulldozer. Such programs would help reform and engage the faculty participating in them and attract more of the kinds of students North points out are essential for departments to attract.

I tend to think that Bruce McComiskey's integrated curriculum uniting all the various subdisciplines found within English studies--linguistics and discourse analysis, rhetoric and composition, literature and literary criticism, creative writing, critical theory and cultural studies-- under the common goal of the "analysis, critique, and production of discourse in a social context" (43) might produce a department and curriculum more favorable for training two-year faculty. However, even such a union and common goal within departments would necessitate a concerted effort to tailor a program with appropriate courses to two-year teachers' needs. Again, such efforts to create suitable preparation for current and future two-year faculty could attract new students to graduate English departments and subsequently lead to significant changes within those departments willing to undertake such training.

For at least two decades, knowledgeable professionals have called on universities to shift their focus:

> Advanced classes in esoteric specialities can't fill, highly educated PhDs in narrow fields can't get jobs. Everywhere that we look we see the demand for generalists, for people who can teach basic skills, communication skills, introductory courses, for educators who can make connections between the world's work and the university, and specifically for people who can teach, not just research. (Roemer, Schultz, and Durst 390)

Such is the essential preparation two-year college instructors seek. It is long past time that more universities make the effort to deliver it.

As others have pointed out (Lovas; Jensen and Toth), it is unthinkable that such a major segment of higher education as two-year colleges should be ignored by the universities. Whatever has caused a divide in the past, be it elitism or social or political differences, the time is now for the two segments to join forces for the benefit of both. Former programs may suggest not only the possibilities but a way forward.[11]

The wheel has been invented. Let us now invent our drone.

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Notes

1. Two-Year College English Association. *TYCA Guidelines for Preparing Teachers of English in the Two-Year College*. *Report of the MLA Task Force on Doctoral Study in Modern Language and Literature*. These calls have the power of prestigious professional associations behind them as did their predecessors and join numerous individual and other collective efforts over the years. For a few historical examples see, "The National Study of English in the Junior College"; Steinberg; Wooten; *MLA*

Committee on Professional Employment Final Report; Two-Year College English Association, "Guidelines," 2004.

2. For an early program that predates the one described in this article and had a number of differences, see Davies.

3. Although the Doctor of Arts degree was first conceived in the early 1930s, it was not until the late 1960s that universities began offering the degree in a number of fields. See Judith S. Glazer's history of the degree, 3-4.

4. At the same time it created the two-year college English program, Carnegie Mellon began a similar program in history.

5. See Jan Cohn's discussion of this "bump in the road" for the peer relationship in "A D.A. Program," 34-5.

6. Authors and works in this course were Norman Mailer, *Miami and the Siege of Chicago*; Jimmy Breslin, *How the Good Guys Finally Won*; Gore Vidal, *Burr*; Tom Wolfe, *Radical Chic and Mau-Mauing the Flak Catchers*; Alvin Toffler, *Future Shock*; Richard Adams, *Watership Down*; John Updike, *Museums and Women*; Maya Angelou, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*; Joyce Carol Oates, *Expensive People*; Saul Bellow, *Mr. Sammler's Planet*; John Fowles, *The Ebony Tower.*

7. Among the authors read and discussed were T.S. Eliot, Willa Cather, Sherwood Anderson, Sinclair Lewis, Marianne Moore, Vachel Lindsay, John Dos Passos, Robert Frost, Eugene O'Neil, Edna St. Vincent Millay, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, Claude McKay, Langston Hughes, Arna Bontemps, Countee Cullen, Jean Toomer, William Faulkner, and Wallace Stevens.

8. This is by no means a new idea, and over the years some universities have hired two-year college faculty or used them as consultants, but the practice has not been widespread. See E. Cowan; Mognis.

9. For some descriptions of faculty and their work over the years, see Griffith and Connor; Starr; Grubb; Reynolds; Toth et al.

10. Ellen Andrews Knodt, a participant in the CMU program, has written about its discontinuation and the disappearance of the Doctor of Arts degree at other universities. See also Jensen and Toth.

11. I call on others who are products of what they consider good but extinct two-year college teacher training programs to share details with the profession--the strengths and weaknesses--so that others might learn from their histories. For more on the past history of training efforts, see Kroll; Knodt; and Jensen and Toth.

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